

# If You Lived at The Jackson Homestead

## Pre- and Post- Visit Materials

### Newton History Museum at The Jackson Homestead

The *If You Lived at The Jackson Homestead* program introduces students in grades K-2 to the lives of mommies, daddies, and children in the nineteenth century. Students compare their lives today with those of William and Mary Jackson and their 14 children. They play a guessing game, learn new vocabulary, and handle real objects related to learning, working, playing, and dressing. This is an ideal program for groups studying family life and communities now and long ago.



Candle factory label, drawn by Ellen Jackson, c. 1840

#### About Your Visit:

Parking is available on Washington Street and Jackson Road. Groups arriving in buses may be dropped off at the museum's driveway, but please do not park there. The *If You Lived at The Jackson Homestead* program is held in the original kitchen and in the Newton History Gallery; the program lasts about 45 minutes. If you wish to conclude your program with a snack, please notify the staff in advance and plan for an additional 15 minutes. You must bring all snack supplies. Please note that there are no longer any period rooms, including the bedroom, at the Newton History Museum. Have your group divided into four smaller groups prior to arrival; this will facilitate the hands-on portion of the program. In order to preserve the artifacts and documents on display, flash photography is not allowed in the museum.

#### About the Museum:

The Newton History Museum at The Jackson Homestead features exhibits and programs on Newton, one of the country's earliest railroad suburbs, and on the 1809 Homestead itself, a stop on the Underground Railroad before the Civil War and home to the family of William Jackson throughout the nineteenth century. The Museum offers a wide variety of education programs for all ages that highlight the history of American people and culture using the city of Newton as a case study. The programs engage students in active learning through observing, discussing, and participating in hands-on activities.

## Teacher Background

### The Jackson Family and The Jackson Homestead:

Edward Jackson, one of the earliest settlers in Newton, arrived in 1642 from London. In 1646 he purchased a 500 acre farm covering much of what is today Newton Corner and Newtonville. On this land he built a saltbox house in about 1670.

The Jackson family prospered and grew. In 1809 Timothy Jackson, Edward's great, great-grandson, removed the saltbox and re-used parts of it to build the larger and more elegant Homestead that still stands today. This Federal-style house, marked by its symmetry, was a fine, middle-class house for its time.

Timothy's son, William, was living in Boston when he inherited the house. He returned to Newton in 1820, with his family. William was involved in local and state government, was a prime mover in the creation of the Newton Temperance Society, and foresaw the possibilities for suburban development in Newton. He played a major role in attracting the first railroad to Newton, the one that would run in front of his home.

He also moved the tallow (animal fat) soap and candle manufactory, started by his father, from Boston to the Homestead (see the candle label on the front). In addition, William, his daughter Ellen, his brother Francis, and the rest of his family were active in the Abolition movement. The Homestead was a documented stop on the Underground Railroad.



Saltbox house as drawn by Ellen Jackson, 1894



The William Jackson Family, 1846

The Jackson Homestead was a busy place in the nineteenth century. William had a large family. He married Hannah Woodward in 1806 and, after her death in 1812, he married Mary Bennett, Hannah's nurse. He had five children with Hannah and twelve children with Mary (three of whom died as infants).

## Teacher Background

### The Changing Nature of Family Life in Nineteenth-Century New England:

The nineteenth century was a period of great change in New England society and family life. In 1800, most New Englanders lived in rural agricultural communities. Families supported themselves with little outside help. Fathers did seasonal work in the fields and practiced trades such as blacksmithing or carpentry. Mothers raised children; tended the homes, kitchen gardens, and dairies; and made the family clothes. Children helped with various tasks around the home and farm. Surplus produced by the family would be traded to obtain those things the family could not make itself.

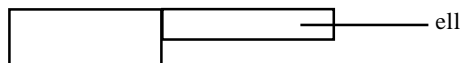
By the middle of the nineteenth-century, new modes of transportation, the growth of cities, the rise of manufacturing, and the decline of wide-spread agriculture — all interconnected — changed these family roles. Women’s work in textile production was now performed in mills. Men increasingly worked away from home, earning money to buy what the family needed. Children, whose labor was no longer central to family survival, could attend school more months of the year. The focus of the family was shifting gradually from production to consumption.

### Suggested Vocabulary:

**beehive oven:** an oven with a domed top, shaped like a natural beehive

**curator:** a museum worker who takes care of artifacts and documents, creates exhibits, and shares information with people who visit the museum

**ell:** an extension, generally at right angles, to a building



**homestead:** a home and nearby land where a family lives

**nineteenth-century:** the 1800s

### Suggested Pre-Visit Activities:

1. Discuss with students what is meant by “nineteenth century.” Have them create a timeline in words and pictures that includes their lives, their parents lives, their grandparents lives, and the lives of the Jackson family members 180 years ago. Discuss what “long ago” means to the students?
2. What do students think museums are? What do they think museum workers do? Create lists that answer these questions and see if their ideas change after their visit to the Newton History Museum at The Jackson Homestead.

### Suggested Post-Visit Activities:

1. Draw and color pictures of the objects the students explored at the Museum. Have them draw the objects with daddies, mommies, and children using them.
2. Compare and contrast what the students saw in the kitchen at the Museum and what their families use in their kitchens today. Which do the students prefer and why?

## Selected Teacher Bibliography

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## Selected Student Bibliography

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<i>The General Store</i>	<i>A One-Room School</i>
<i>The Victorian Home</i>	<i>Children's Clothing of the 1800s</i>
<i>19th Century Girls and Women</i>	<i>Games from Long Ago</i>
<i>A Child's Day</i>	<i>The Kitchen</i>
<i>19th Century Clothing</i>	<i>Home Crafts</i>
<i>Customs and Traditions</i>	<i>Tools and Gadgets</i>
<i>Old-Time Toys</i>	

Kalman, Bobbie. *Early Settler Life Series*. New York: Crabtree Press. Titles include:

<i>Early Village Life</i>	<i>Early Health and Medicine</i>
<i>Early Schools</i>	<i>Early Farm Life</i>
<i>Early Pleasures and Pastimes</i>	<i>Early City Life</i>
<i>Early Family Home</i>	

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